

## CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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### Updating The LCP – A Place to Start

#### *What is an LCP?*

*Local coastal program means a local government's (a) land use plans, (b) zoning ordinances, (c) zoning district maps, and (d) within sensitive coastal resource areas, other implementing actions, which, when taken together, meet the requirements of, and implement the provisions and policies of the California Coastal Act (PRC 30108.6)*

#### *Who is Issuing the Permits?*

*As of 2007, about 70% of the 128 local coastal program segments of the 75 coastal jurisdictions were certified and the local jurisdictions were issuing permits for most developments in those certified areas. In addition to areas that do not yet have a certified LCP, the Coastal Commission retains permitting jurisdiction below mean high tide, on public trust or tidelands, and may exercise permit authority within its appeal jurisdiction (see Coastal Act 30603).*

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The California Coastal Act of 1976 ushered in an era of significant new land use planning in California. Local governments prepared and implemented Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) to carry out the Coastal Act's mandate to protect coastal resources and maximize public access to the shoreline. These LCPs established the allowable kinds, locations, and intensities of new development in the coastal zone, and set out other development limitations, to achieve the objectives of the Coastal Act. Once an LCP was certified by the Coastal Commission, local governments were given the responsibility of issuing coastal permits for most new development, subject to the standards of their LCPs.

In the last two decades LCPs have become an important part of California's coastal zone management program. But the Commission and many local governments have also recognized that LCPs need to be updated to remain effective. Significant changes have occurred that directly impact our efforts to protect California's coast. Population and development patterns have changed, leading to new pressures on resources and public access. New nonpoint source pollution laws are in place, and scientists have learned more about sensitive species, habitats and other coastal resources. Global warming and sea level rise are real concerns that must be considered in land use decisions.

Successfully providing for a community's need to grow and thrive while protecting resources depends on our ability to address such changes in our planning documents. If an LCP is out of sync with current conditions, knowledge, and practices, the potential for land use conflicts is exacerbated, and we are less likely to achieve either appropriate development or coastal resource protection. At the same time, comprehensive planning updates are increasingly difficult to undertake in part because there are so many issues and committed stakeholders. Resources for such planning are typically limited. This document is intended to support LCP update efforts by providing core guidance for meeting Coastal Act policies in the face of change. It does not cover every issue that should be considered in an update, but it does highlight recent Coastal Commission decisions and policy concerns that most coastal communities need to address. It is a place to start.

*LCP Amendment Submittal  
procedures may be found at:*

*Coastal Act Chapter 6*

*CCR Title 14, Div. 5.5 at  
Chapter 8 13500-13648*

## ***Getting Started – Some Initial Concerns***

LCP updates should attempt to address every major policy area in Chapter Three of the Coastal Act. This guide discusses issues in 10 key areas, linked below for quick reference:

- Section 1 – Public Access.
- Section 2 – Recreation and Visitor Serving Facilities.
- Section 3 – Water Quality.
- Section 4 – Natural Resources (ESHA, Wetlands, etc.).
- Section 5 – Agricultural Resources
- Section 6 – Planning and Locating New Development.
- Section 7 – Scenic Resources.
- Section 8 – Coastal Hazards.
- Section 9 – Shoreline Erosion and Protective Structures.
- Section 10 – Energy, Industrial and Other Coastal Development.

## ***Updated Planning Needed to Support Policy Change***

When governments developed LCPs in the 1980s, they included significant planning data and background analysis to support the proposed policies and ordinances. It is important to update this background data and analysis to support an LCP update. New information such as updated build out projections and analysis of available public services is key information for decision-makers to develop updated policy and to address consistency with the Coastal Act. The Commission will likely request such updated analyses to support an LCP Update amendment submittal.

### *Frequently Used Acronyms*

LCP: Local Coastal Program

LUP: Land Use Plan

IP: Implementation Plan  
(*zoning ordinances, zoning  
district maps, and other  
implementing actions*)

NOAA: National Oceanic  
and Atmospheric  
Administration

## ***Identifying the LCP***

In many cases, different portions of LCPs have been certified at different times and undergone multiple revisions. This has sometimes led to confusion about what documents compose an LCP. An LCP update provides an opportunity to clarify what your LCP includes. You should specifically identify which documents, portion of documents, and maps are a part of the final certified program and thus intended to apply in the coastal zone. The relevant portions of any reference documents or sources cited should also be incorporated into the updated LCP submitted for certification. These steps will ensure that any changes to these documents are considered amendments to the LCP and thus will continue to apply in your coastal zone.

## ***Local Context Matters***

As explained above, this guide is intended to highlight recent policy concerns in core Coastal Act issue areas. It does not cover all topics that should be addressed in LCP Update; additional publications are planned on such topics as updating the procedural components of LCPs. In

addition, because resource conditions and other local circumstances differ from region to region, and by community, specific questions about what should be addressed in a specific LCP Update should be directed to the appropriate Commission District Office. Phone numbers for each District office are provided below. For more contact information go to:

<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/address.html>.

District Office/Unit	Phone Number
North Coast District (Eureka)	(707) 445-7833
North Central Coast District (San Francisco)	(415) 904-5260
Central Coast District (Santa Cruz)	(831) 427-4863
South Central Coast District (Ventura)	(805) 585-1800
South Coast District (Long Beach)	(562) 590-5071
San Diego Coast District (San Diego)	(619) 767-2370
Headquarters Statewide Planning Office (San Francisco)	(415) 904-5280
Energy and Ocean Resources Unit (San Francisco)	(415) 904-5240
Statewide Enforcement Unit (San Francisco)	(415) 904-5200